

Central Business District
Architectural Review Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: November 25, 2014

Location: City Hall, 1300 Perdido Street, 7th Floor, New Orleans, LA

Called to order: 9:30 a.m.

Adjourned: 11:30 a.m.

Members Present: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Members arriving after beginning of the meeting:

Members absent: Robby Cangelosi, Ashley King

I. AGENDA

1. Approval of the minutes of the October ARC Meeting

Motion: Approve the minutes.

By: Lee Ledbetter

Seconded: Brooks Graham

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments:

2. 611-15 Commerce Street:

Application: Demolition of existing warehouse and construction of 5-story, approximately 21,315 sf, multi-family residential building.

Motion: The ARC agreed the proportions of the 1st floor and the 5th floor with mezzanine appear inappropriately inverted in some of the elevations schemes presented, specifically the 1st floor height is too short and the 5th floor height is too tall. The ARC recommended the 1st floor height be increased to a minimum of 12'-0" and the scale of the true floor to floor heights be architecturally mitigated by establishing a two-part composition of a strong base with the remainder of the building above. The ARC suggested one way to successfully accomplish this could be pairing the fenestration at the 1st and 2nd floors similar to what is shown in the Metro Studios proposal Option 1 presented in July 2014 and dividing the fenestration at the 5th floor similar to what is shown in the Mark Schroeder proposal Scheme C.

The ARC agreed the bay windows are not typical of the Warehouse local historic district, which is characterized by flat, coplanar walls. The ARC agreed that if the windows were more characteristically coplanar, the mutin pattern could diverge from typical historic patterns to subtly and appropriately denote the building as new construction.

Elliott Perkins made a motion to defer further review of the project pending incorporation of the ARC recommendations.

Seconded: Brooks Graham

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments: Several speakers spoke regarding their concerns about the proposed design.

3. 632 Tchoupitoulas St, 619-631 Commerce St:

Application: Demolition of existing building remnant and construction of a new 7-story, 108,831 sf hotel with full service restaurant on existing vacant lot.

Motion: Although the ARC agreed that the proposed Commerce Street elevation successfully responds to the existing architecture of the surrounding area with an appropriate industrial language, the proposed Tchoupitoulas elevation needs further study. It was suggested that this elevation should take cues from the Commerce Street elevation, perhaps even mimicking the first three bays with its stronger horizontal divisions. The verticality and punched openings of the proposal are problematic in that this emphasizes the shallow floor to ceiling heights within.

The relationship of the first floor height to that of the first floors of other buildings on the block should be investigated further. However, the Committee did agree that the "weight" of the ground floor appropriately anchors the upper floors. There was some concern that the proposal does not realistically reflect the base flood elevation and the true finish floor height of the ground floor.

The canopy at the ground floor should be raised to allow more glass. Although some Committee members agreed that the canopy element at the cornice was interesting others were concerned that this element would be more successful if further incorporated into the overall composition. The ARC found the scheme with the intermittent balconies interesting if they were handled more delicately.

Lee Ledbetter made a motion to defer the matter and request that the applicant revise their design based on the recommendations of the ARC.

Seconded: Brooks Graham

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments: Several speakers spoke regarding their concerns about the proposed design.

4. 749-751 St Charles Avenue

Application: Partial demolition of existing building and construction of six-story side and rear addition and renovation of remaining three-story building, including addition of penthouse, balcony, and new storefront.

Motion: The ARC made the following recommendations:

- The glass guardrails are incongruous with the materials of the historic building and the historical reference of the new construction. The guardrails should be metal.
- The guardrail at the top of the rooftop addition to the historic building should be setback from the parapet in accordance with HDLC Guidelines.
- The guardrail on the balcony needs further study.
- The balcony on the existing building appears to be drawn differently in the elevations and the rendering; the height of the balcony in the elevations is correct and the balconies of the existing building and the new construction should align.

- The mutin pattern of the doors at the 1st floor of the existing building to remain should reflect the appropriate historic typology.
- True stucco over historic masonry does not require control joints.
- On the rear (Carondelet St.) elevation, the sill height of the windows at the outside edges (where there is no balcony) should be raised to match the sill height of the windows at the center.

Elliott Perkins made a motion to defer further review of the project pending incorporation of the ARC recommendations and determination of the necessary variances. The ARC agreed that should the variances for the number of floors and height be granted such that the design does not change from what was reviewed at this meeting, the proposal does not need to return to ARC for further review and may proceed to Commission.

Seconded: Lee Ledbetter

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments:

5. 333 St. Charles Avenue

Application: Upgrades to the exterior of the existing building. Includes lighting, changes to existing canopy and addition of mosaic at front entry.

Motion: The ARC agreed that the modifications to the lighting of the non-historic front canopy are acceptable. However, they did not find any of the proposals to add mosaic to the panels within the loggia were appropriate as presented. They recommended recessing the surface of the panels allowing a deeper reveal with the translucent stone mosaic panels to be mounted away from the surface, floated more like a temporary installation than a permanently attached building element. This could be back lit for added interest. Lee Ledbetter made a motion to defer the matter and request that the applicant revise their proposal based on the ARC recommendations.

Seconded: Brooks Graham

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments:

6. 623 Canal Street

Application: Modifications to exterior of building.

Motion: The ARC agreed that they could recommend conceptual approval of the rooftop addition provided that it includes the removal of the existing billboards. The second floor gallery could also be recommended for conceptual approval. However, the third floor gallery and fourth floor balcony are not appropriate. Elements of the existing architecture, such as the prominent window sills, do not indicate that balconies or galleries existed historically at these levels. The modifications necessary to accommodate them would not be appropriate. Elliott Perkins made a motion to defer the matter and request that the applicant revise the proposal based on the ARC recommendations.

Seconded: Brooks Graham

Result: Passed

In favor: Lee Ledbetter, Brooks Graham, Elliott Perkins

Opposed:

Comments:

At this time there was no further business to discuss and the meeting was adjourned.